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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 85/NO. 33 SEPTEMBER 6, 2021

INSIDE

The stewardship of land and labor falls to the working class

— PAGE 5

SWP campaign draws lessons from past class struggle battles

BY ROY LANDERSEN

"This is a book about the dictatorship of capital and the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat," Jacquie Henderson read to retired health care worker Rose Skarski from a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* at her door in La Grange, northeast of Louisville, Kentucky, Aug. 20. Henderson and fellow Socialist Workers Party campaigner Samir Hazboun were introducing the SWP and the *Militant* to working people in the area.

Henderson explained that the book by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes shows "what we can learn from struggles during the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction to today, helping us gain confidence to build the leadership needed to organize millions to take power into our own hands." Reconstruction regimes were set up in Mississippi, South Carolina and elsewhere as part of the fight to

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US rulers' war in Afghanistan was disaster for working people

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Since Joseph Biden ordered U.S. troops out of Afghanistan, an admission the U.S. rulers' 20-year war there was a failure, Taliban forces swept across the country taking Kabul, the capital, Aug. 15. Some 5,800 U.S. troops, alongside 1,000 British soldiers and other allied forces, have occupied Kabul's international airport, organizing a massive airlift to evacuate their own citizens and approved Afghan collaborators, with an Aug. 31 deadline to depart.

Thousands of Afghans have surrounded the airfield desperately trying to board flights. Over 20 people have died in the crush. U.S. troops have used tear gas to deter crowds trying to reach the airport. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid has now announced no more Afghan nationals would be allowed to leave the country.

The U.S. rulers ended their war in Afghanistan after inflicting two decades of devastation on working people, costing

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Back the Warrior Met miners, Nabisco strikes!

Willamette Week/Mick Hangland-Skill

Workers picket Portland, Oregon, Nabisco plant, to block bosses' steep concession demands.

Warrior Met strike is a 'union issue for the whole nation'

BY SUSAN LAMONT

MCCALLA, Ala. — "We decided to take up the cause of the striking miners because this is a union issue for the whole nation," Mark Bass, president of International Longshoremen's Association Local 1410 in Mobile, Alabama, told the *Militant* in an Aug. 20 phone interview. Bass helped organize ILA members to join in the Aug. 4 rally in Brookwood, Alabama, to back the strike by 1,100 United Mine Workers of America members against Warrior Met Coal there.

"If we allow Warrior Met to get away with their union-busting tac-

Continued on page 4

Nabisco strikers fight to keep 'what we already won'

BY REBECCA WILLIAMSON

PORTLAND, Ore. — "We were the first to go out, on Aug. 10," Cameron Taylor, business agent for Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union Local 364, which represents about 200 workers on strike at the Nabisco bakery here, told the *Militant* Aug. 21.

Their strike began a cascade of other walkouts at Nabisco: its distribution plant in Aurora, Colorado, Aug. 12; at its bakery in Richmond, Virginia, Aug. 16; at the company's flagship U.S. bakery in Chicago Aug. 19; and in Norcross, Georgia, Aug. 23.

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Imperialist scorn, Cuban solidarity on display after earthquake in Haiti

Brigada Médica Cubana en Haití

Volunteer Cuban health workers treat earthquake victims, other patients outside hospital in Corail, Haiti, Aug. 24. Cuban internationalists have worked continuously in Haiti for 22 years.

BY SETH GALINSKY

With more than 2,100 dead, over 12,000 injured and an estimated 136,000 families left homeless after an Aug. 14 earthquake that ravaged southwest Haiti, the trickle of international aid is nowhere near what is needed.

Just like in previous disasters there — including the 2010 earthquake that left about 300,000 dead and Hurricane Matthew in 2016 — the grossly inadequate aid shows that working people in Haiti don't count for much in the eyes of the capitalist rulers in Washington and other imperialist powers. Despite the death

PROTEST US ECONOMIC WAR AGAINST CUBA! — page 7

toll from previous disasters, Washington and the succession of Haitian governments it has dominated haven't improved the utterly inadequate health

Continued on page 6

All working people have a stake in outcome of today's labor struggles

BY TERRY EVANS

The frontlines of the fight to defend jobs, wages and working conditions today are union picket lines of miners at Warrior Met Coal in Alabama, Nabisco bakery workers on strike in five states, nurses at St. Vincent Hospital in Massachusetts and locked-out Texas oil refinery workers at ExxonMobil.

These workers are fighting to win back gains they were pressured to give up in the past and stand up to new attacks from the bosses. They're setting an example for millions of fellow workers of how we can unite, strengthen our unions and defend ourselves.

"All workers have a stake in the outcome of these labor battles," Henry Dennison, a railroad switchman, member of SMART-Transportation Division Local 324 and Socialist Workers Party candidate for Seattle mayor, told the *Militant*. "We need to help get the word out about these fights. They'll strike a chord with fellow workers and help build solidarity and working-class consciousness."

Dennison, a former coal miner, was written up in his national union newspaper for organizing union solidarity with the striking miners at Warrior Met. "Workers in many industries face at-

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Texas execution set, sentiment against death penalty grows

BY JANET POST

John Henry Ramirez is scheduled to be executed by lethal injection at the Texas State Penitentiary in Huntsville Sept. 8, the third execution there this year.

Ramirez filed a federal suit Aug. 10 after prison officials denied his request to have his pastor, Dana Moore of the Second Baptist Church, pray with him in the death chamber and lay hands on him as he dies. Ramirez's attorney filed for his execution to be postponed while the issue is litigated.

The U.S. Supreme Court halted the execution of Willie B. Smith III in Alabama in February after prison officials denied his right to have his pastor with him. In 2019 the court stayed the execution of Patrick Murphy in Texas when the state decided to bar his Buddhist spiritual adviser from the room.

In 2008 Ramirez was convicted of stabbing store clerk Pablo Castro to death seeking money to buy drugs when he was 20. He took $1.25 from the dying clerk's pocket.

During his trial, he opposed letting family members testify before the jury about how his mother had been stabbed by her husband in front of him when he was a child, his drug use at the age of 12, and his discharge from the U.S. Marines for manic depression. Ramirez instructed his court-appointed lawyers to discontinue all efforts to persuade the jury to spare his life.

In prison Ramirez has become a voracious reader, writes poetry, draws and writes letters to supporters. He complains about the conditions imposed on people on death row. "In seg[regation] you have no human contact, can't attend classes/church/work," he wrote in 2015. "My routine consists of waking up, washing up, going to rec, then coming back to the cell, going to the shower and then coming back to the cell, then just killing time till the next day when I'd do it all over again."

Ramirez's execution has been postponed twice — in 2017 when he asked for a new lawyer after his attorney failed to file an appeal for clemency and in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Six more executions are scheduled in Texas this year. There are some 2,550 death-row inmates in federal, state and military prisons today.

Prisons want to try nitrogen

Because more and more drug companies refuse to provide death rows with murderous chemicals, three state prison systems — in Alabama, Mississippi and Oklahoma — are making plans to put inmates to death by pumping nitrogen into their gas chambers, progressively depriving inmates of oxygen.

The Alabama Department of Corrections "declined to describe even in general terms what it has built," reported The Associated Press Aug. 10, "including whether it is a room or an apparatus in the existing death chamber — and an estimated timeframe for completing the protocol."

Because of the difficulty today of getting deadly chemicals, and because of growing revulsion at clear instances of pain and suffering by inmates executed by lethal injection, more states are seeking alternatives, including poison gas, electric chairs and firing squads. The Justice Department has changed its protocols to allow the federal death row in Terre Haute, Indiana, to use all these execution methods.

KUT/Julia Reihs

Protest in Texas against death penalty and execution of Rodney Reed in 2019. Reed, who has been on death row more than 23 years, and John Ramirez, who is scheduled to be executed Sept. 8, are two of the 198 prisoners on Texas death row, and of some 2,550 across the country.

Arizona prison officials earlier this year announced they were planning to use hydrogen cyanide for executions, the same gas employed by the Nazis in Auschwitz during the Holocaust. Jewish organizations spoke up in outrage. "While there can be no doubt about its effectiveness — the Nazis used it to kill millions of innocent Jews — it is that very effectiveness as an instrument of genocide that makes it utterly inappropriate for use by a civilized state," the American Jewish Committee said June 7.

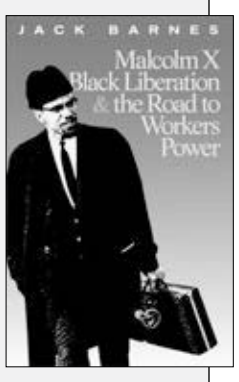
There is growing opposition to the death penalty among working people and an increasing number of state governments have abolished it.

A 2019 Gallup poll reported that a majority of people — 60% to 36% — oppose use of the death penalty in murder cases. And only 9% of people polled in the U.S. this year think that a firing squad is humane.

"The death penalty is a weapon of terror the capitalist ruling class wants to have at the ready to intimidate the working class, and vanguard fighters, in the years ahead as resistance to its rule grows," Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Philadelphia district attorney, told the *Militant*. "The U.S. rulers incarcerate a higher percentage of the population than any other country in the world, overwhelmingly working class and disproportionately Black.

"The Socialist Workers Party fights for total abolition of the death penalty."

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, & the Road to Workers Power



"This is a book about the dictatorship of capital and the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat. A book about the last century and a half of class struggle in the United States ... and the unimpeachable evidence it offers that workers who are Black will comprise a disproportionately weighty part of the ranks and leadership of the mass social movement that will make a proletarian revolution."

— Jack Barnes

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THE MILITANT

Support workers' fight against gov't eviction!

Workers in Sydney are standing up to the Australian government, which has ordered them evicted from homes they have lived in for decades to build a commercial car park. The 'Militant' backs their fight, demands housing as a social right for all workers.

Chris Lane

Sam and Monika Charan carrying out fight against government evictions in Australia.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*'s views. These are expressed in editorials.

Lessons from past class battles

Continued from front page

prevent former slave owners from restoring virtual slave labor conditions after the Civil War.

"They never taught us anything about Reconstruction in school," said Skarski. "And certainly not anything about these governments." They adopted universal male suffrage, established the first free public schools and hospitals, eliminated whipping and expanded grounds on which women could get a divorce. They were deeply popular among working people of all skin colors.

Growing up in Chicago, "I was always aware that something was terribly wrong," Skarski said. "The fight against segregation didn't just change the South. Black students in my school had a separate entrance and had to study downstairs in the boiler room. No one talked about it. But the civil rights movement changed all that, too."

"I want to help what you're doing. I'm going to start by getting the library to order that book," she told Henderson and Hazboun as she subscribed to the *Militant*.

Bosses push workers to do more

"Sometimes they make us work through our lunch break," warehouse worker Milagro Negron told SWP members Dan Fein and Leroy Watson when they knocked on her door in Bellwood, a suburb of Chicago. "We often work more than our scheduled eight hours — at straight time. They don't hire enough workers to unload the trucks and stock. All for just $13 an hour. My co-workers and I have discussed the idea of a strike."

"Sounds like where Leroy and I work at Walmart," Fein responded. "The bosses everywhere are pushing us to do more work with fewer workers. There are millions more unemployed today compared with before the pandemic. "

"Only by the working class taking political power out of the hands of the capitalists, can we put an end to this system of exploitation. The SWP aims to lead such a revolution."

"I'm on board with that!" Negron responded. She got a copy of *In Defense of the U.S. Working Class* by Mary-Alice Waters for herself and her grandson.

Workers need our own party

Dennis Richter, the Socialist Workers Party's candidate for governor in California's recall election, was the featured speaker at a campaign forum in Oakland Aug. 21. The meeting kicked off five days of campaigning in the northern part of the state that included campaign supporters from Seattle, Los Angeles and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Joel Britton, SWP candidate for State Assembly, opened the meeting with news that the strike of Nabisco workers in Portland, Oregon, has spread to other cities. "We will be with Nabisco workers on their picket lines, building solidarity as part of the pressing task of rebuilding and strengthening unions," Richter said.

"In order to contend with the capitalists, workers need our own party, a labor party, with a program aimed at taking power away from those responsible for the disastrous conditions workers confront today," he said.

"This is the opposite of what the Democratic Party supporters of Gov. Newsom and those seeking to replace him are doing in this election," Richter continued. "They are using the recall to channel workers angry at the system away from working class action and into supporting the capitalist parties."

Richter described the results in Wisconsin in 2011 when union officials turned weekly protests in Madison by tens of thousands against anti-union laws into an electoral effort to recall Republican Gov. Scott Walker.

The end result of this class-collaborationist course was that membership in the state's public employees unions fell by nearly 65% between 2011 and 2019. Richter urged those present to read the introduction to *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes. It describes how the SWP responded to what took place by turning toward working people across the state to discuss what can be done to resist the bosses' offensive and the need to organize and mobilize the power of the working class independent of the two big-business parties.

"We don't take a position on these recalls," Richter said. "We say don't check the box either for or against the recall of Newsom because either way you are voting for a capitalist politician to win. Register your vote for the Socialist Workers Party, a working-class alternative."

Richter contrasted the party's position to the course advocated by socialists in the Democratic Party. "They act in the framework of bourgeois electoral politics, trying to use the capitalist state to make reforms. They have the illusion that having a recall within the capitalist electoral system will somehow make things more democratic. It won't."

When capitalist rule is threatened "in periods of economic and political crisis," Richter said, "the rulers unleash the fascists against the workers' movement as they did in Germany."

Richter described how the union movement in Minneapolis effectively repelled the fascist goons in the late 1930s by organizing mass protests and a workers' defense guard.

"In a deep crisis the question is posed, either socialist revolution or fascism," Richter said. "These are the stakes in building the Socialist Workers Party, a party that can act decisively to lead working people in their millions to take the power into their own hands."

The next day SWP campaigners went door-to-door in a working-class neighborhood in San Leandro.

One of those they met was Eddie Hernandez, a Navy veteran and retiree who told Britton about his encounter with the medical system after suffering a stroke. His friends called an ambulance, but he said he screamed at them not to take him because of the cost. "Sure enough," Hernandez said, "when the bill came for the 4.2-mile trip, it was for $2,500."

"Medical care should not be a commodity," Britton said. "Look at what working people in Cuba have won by making a socialist revolution. This made it possible for them to organize medical care as a right, not something for profit."

Hernandez said he was concerned about growing homelessness, unemployment and rising prices. "To fight to change these things we need to build a working-class leadership like they did in Cuba," Britton said. "We need to build the Socialist Workers Party." Hernandez subscribed to the *Militant*.

Unions should fight for vaccinations

"My husband and I have been playing catch-up, trying to keep up with bills, the rent, and to have enough to buy food," Veronica Daniel told Rachele Fruit, SWP candidate for mayor of Atlanta, on her doorstep in East Point, Georgia. She explained her husband had been laid off from his job and she had to leave her job to care for her mother.

"A lot of workers have been laid off and what about the people who are going to be put out of their apartments in the next months?" she added.

"The profit system we live under needs to be ended," Fruit said. "We are building a party that can lead workers in our millions to take power and run the government for human needs. It starts with building solidarity wherever working people are fighting the bosses and their government." She pointed to the strike of miners at Warrior Met Coal in Alabama.

"I don't understand why people are afraid of getting vaccinated," Daniel added. "We all took our shots."

"We say our unions should be leading a fight to get workers vaccinated so we can organize together to fight to change our conditions," Fruit said.

"You say you're running for mayor. I would vote for you," Daniel said. "Most important," Fruit said, "is to join with us in building a movement to change this system we live under." Daniel got a copy of the *Militant* newspaper.

To find out more or to join the SWP or Communist League campaigns, contact the party branch nearest you in the directory on page 8.

Militant/Josefina Otero

Dennis Richter, right, SWP candidate for governor of California, talks to Noble Kaus at San Leandro Walmart store Aug. 22. Richter urged Kaus, who works at a union-organized chocolate factory, to join in bringing solidarity to workers facing lockouts and strikes today.

Canada: Communist League files for ballot in Montreal

Militant/Katy LeRougetel

MONTREAL — In a concentrated 10-day effort to introduce the Communist League campaign to working people here and gather the electors needed to place Michel Prairie, left, the CL candidate in the Bourassa constituency, on the ballot in the Sept. 20 federal election, campaign supporters talked to hundreds of workers on their doorsteps. They discussed the party's program, the need for solidarity with workers' struggles today, and the need to "build a party that can lead the working class to take power." This is the headline on the campaign leaflet they gave workers they talked to, inviting them to an Aug. 28 election campaign rally.

Liberal Party Prime Minister Justin Trudeau dissolved Parliament and called the "snap" election Aug. 15, three years early, in hopes of turning his minority government into a majority. "The Communist League campaign builds solidarity with workers and youth standing up for their rights, like the meatpackers on strike against Olymel in Beauce, Quebec," campaigners told workers they talked to.

"Cuba's socialist revolution showed that with a Marxist leadership working people can transform ourselves through our struggles and establish a workers and farmers government capable of ending all forms of oppression and exploitation," Prairie told 30 people at a Militant Labor Forum July 31 launching the campaign. "That's what is needed here in Canada as well."

Campaigners gathered 175 electors — well over the 100 required — and sold 26 Pathfinder books on the lessons of over 170 years of the international class struggle.

Prairie handed in the signatures and nomination papers Aug. 24.

— JOHN STEELE

'Militant' schedule

This is a two-week issue. *Militant* no. 34 will be mailed out September 9.

Back Warrior Met miners!

Continued from front page

tics, it will affect unions and working people everywhere," Bass said, adding that ILA Local 1410 is currently involved in its own contract negotiations at the Port of Mobile. "We understand the need for solidarity."

Some 60 ILA members from Charleston, South Carolina; Jacksonville, Florida; and Mobile were among the more than 1,500 striking miners, family members, UMWA retirees and other unionists who gathered together for the strongest show of labor solidarity for the strike since miners walked off the job April 1.

ILA members were warmly welcomed at the rally and their presence had a big impact. "We're committed to winning this strike," ILA Local 1422 President Ken Riley from Charleston told rally participants from the stage.

The ILA represents some 65,000 longshoremen on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, Great Lakes, major U.S. rivers, Puerto Rico and eastern Canada.

The ILA locals pledged to broaden support for the strike, including getting the word out to the International Longshore and Warehouse Union on the West Coast.

UMWA members in Brookwood are staffing round-the-clock picket lines at the two Warrior Met mines, No. 4 and No. 7, as well as a preparation plant, central shops and at several railroad crossings. The union sponsors weekly solidarity rallies every Wednesday night at 6 p.m. at nearby Tannehill State Park, often featuring speakers from other unions.

UMWA Auxiliary

Wives of striking miners have organized a UMWA Auxiliary that has raised thousands of dollars to help provide food, diapers, school supplies and other necessities to strikers' families. Strikers get weekly benefits from the union's strike fund. Its long and growing list of contributing unions, community organizations, and individual donations reflects increasing support for the strike.

Union members are fighting to reverse the conditions they've been working under since 2016, when a concession contract was forced on the union after the mines' previous owner, Jim Walter Resources, went bankrupt the year before. Warrior Met — set up by BlackRock and others of Jim Walter's biggest creditors — threatened to shut the mines unless the union agreed to cuts in pay, increased costs for health care, loss of overtime pay after eight hours, loss of extra overtime pay for Sundays and holidays, loss of 10 annual paid holidays, an attendance policy of "four strikes and you're out," no cap on forced overtime and other concessions.

The union calculates that these concessions cost workers $1.1 billion that went instead into the new owners' coffers over the last five years.

On Aug. 23, the union announced National Labor Relations Board Region 10 Director Lisa Henderson has found merit in unfair labor practice charges the UMWA filed against Warrior Met for "bad faith bargaining" and failure to provide the union with required information. The NLRB had notified Warrior Met Aug. 13 that it should cease and desist.

The Brookwood mines produce metallurgical coal, in high demand by the global steel industry. Warrior Met, one of the top U.S. producers of "met" coal, has reported significant profits in 2021, after a drop in income in 2020 due to the COVID pandemic.

To meet some orders and to undermine the strike, the company has been mining coal at the No. 7 mine with scab labor since the strike began. Some scabs cross the picket lines in their own vehicles; others are brought in on buses with darkened windows. There have been several incidents of scabs hitting union pickets with their vehicles.

Support and solidarity are needed. Help to spread the word about the strike! Send contributions, made out to UMWA 2021 Strike Fund, to UMWA Strike Fund, P.O. Box 513, Dumfries, VA 22026. Messages of support can also be sent to District 20, 21922 Hwy. 216 (Miners' Memorial Parkway), McCalla, AL 35111; Email: umwadistrict20@bellsouth.net.

Los Angeles rally protests Myanmar dictatorship

Militant/Deborah Liatos

LOS ANGELES — Several dozen people rallied in front of the Myanmar Consulate here Aug. 21, the 36th rally in Los Angeles County since the military seized power Feb. 1 and moved to crush a wave of mass demonstrations and strikes against the coup. The public rallies and marches, organized by the Los Angeles Myanmar Movement, have taken place almost every week, drawing up to 500 people.

The military government has been unable to stop protests in Myanmar. On Aug. 8, the 33rd anniversary of an uprising against military rule in 1988, protests took place in the main cities of Yangon, Mandalay, Sagaing and other places across the country. The modest actions happened quickly, then dispersed, with coverage posted on Facebook.

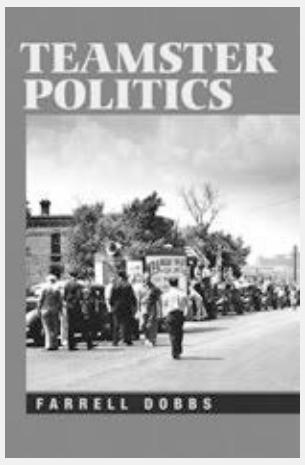
"For five years we had won partial democracy," Ii Maung, one of the organizers of the Los Angeles protest, told the *Militant*. Then the coup came.

Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing announced at the beginning of August that he was now the prime minister and that the military-enforced state of emergency was extended through August 2023.

Speakers at the rally said protests will continue to support the fight of the people in Myanmar until the military government is brought down. A popular chant in Burmese at the actions is, "Our revolution must win."

— DEBORAH LIATOS

Recommended reading



"Unionism and politics cannot be separated. Power generated at the trade-union level can be shattered by government blows. Workers must enter the political arena as an independent class force, with their own party."

— Farrell Dobbs

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25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

September 9, 1996

Thousands of students in South Korea engaged in a nine-day confrontation with the government authorities, demanding reunification of the Korean peninsula. The protests began with a demonstration of 7,000 students in Seoul August 12. The rally was a commemoration of the 51st anniversary of the victory of the Korean people in throwing off the yoke of Japanese colonial domination.

Reunification has been a central demand of working people and youth in Korea ever since the partition of the country by Washington and Moscow following World War II. The U.S.-backed South Korean regime, however, has striven to halt even the most minimal political contact with the North [DPRK].

Some 37,000 U.S. soldiers accompany a South Korean army of 650,000 troops deployed near the "demilitarized zone," an area that separates the DPRK from South Korea.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

September 10, 1971

An important victory in the fight for GI rights was registered July 28 when the Army brass dropped its plans to court-martial Pvt. Ed Jurenas for his role in publishing an antiwar newspaper, The Arctic Arsenal, at Ft. Greely, Alaska.

The Army was forced to retreat because of broad support mobilized in barely more than two months.

Pvt. Jurenas, like most GIs today, was opposed to the war at the time of his induction last year. A member of the Young Socialist Alliance, Jurenas entered the Army with the intention of exercising his constitutional rights to act on his opposition together with other GIs. He said so in a news conference just prior to being inducted.

The response of most GIs to the paper's appearance on post May 20 was favorable and enthusiastic, but the brass immediately set out to suppress this legal expression of dissent.

THE MILITANT
Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

September 7, 1946

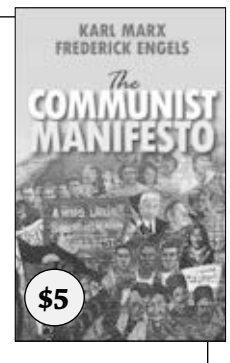
The American imperialists revealed their true reactionary face when on August 29 an order was issued by Gen. MacArthur in Tokyo prohibiting "strikes, walkouts or other work stoppages which are inimical to the objectives of the military occupation."

MacArthur directed the puppet Japanese authorities to break a three-day strike of seamen, coupled with a threat to use American occupation troops if Japanese authorities found "police force" necessary to man the five ships that were tied up.

On August 28, MacArthur had issued another decree banning "noisy, disorderly demonstrations" and threatened to put them down with American troops if this were deemed "necessary." The Japanese government immediately got tough with unionized employees, threatening railway workers with "serious results" if they tried to demonstrate "the union's strength."

The COMMUNIST MANIFESTO
by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

Written in 1848, the Communist Manifesto explains why communism is the line of march of the working class toward power.



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Stewardship of land and labor falls to the working class

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently released its sixth assessment report, provoking renewed hysteria in the capitalist media and among liberal "Green New Deal" proponents that environmental disaster confronts us all today.

The report is "code red for humanity," U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres declared, calling for an end to the burning of fossil fuels. It forecasts a "potentially catastrophic future," predicts the *New York Times*.

"Human-induced climate change," the report asserts, is evidenced by "extremes such as heat waves, heavy precipitation, droughts, and tropical cyclones."

But despite prophecies of impending doom, much in the 4,000-page report shows a different picture, that disaster isn't at our doorstep.

Utterly absent from the U.N.'s findings is any road for how the working class — the only progressive class on earth — can respond to this issue, nor any scientific explanation of the causes of environmental destruction. It is the dog-eat-dog competition for markets and profit that drives the ruling capitalist families to mercilessly exploit all the forces of production, our labor and the world's natural resources, with no regard for the consequences for future generations.

The questions under discussion are important for working people. "*How* social labor is organized to transform nature — to whose benefit, to what social and economic ends — depends on the class relations of production. It depends on which class rules, which class holds state power," says the Socialist Workers Party resolution "The Stewardship of Nature also Falls to the Working Class: In Defense of Land and Labor," adopted in 2007. (See *New International* no. 14.)

"Global warming" is blamed by liberals and middle-class radicals for every disaster from forest fires, like those ravaging California, Oregon, Greece and elsewhere today, to hurricanes, earthquakes and more.

But wildfires don't just happen, they require both tinder and sparks. The real cause of social catastrophes like the Dixie and other fires in California is the refusal of both the government and power companies like Pacific Gas & Electric to take responsibility and to act as stewards of the land. They fail to keep the ground clear of debris and dead plants, to remove fallen trees, and repair and upgrade electric transmission lines and towers. They refuse because to do so would cut into the bosses' profits.

Militant/Tony Lane

Malcolm Jarrett, then SWP vice president candidate and currently SWP candidate for mayor of Pittsburgh, speaks at July 30, 2019, Allegheny County Health Department hearing, says workers need to fight for control of production to stop U.S. Steel plant poisoning workers, community.

Similarly, increased death and destruction from flooding fall in starkly different ways on different social classes under capitalism. "Throughout most of the world," states the SWP resolution, "the poorest layers of the rural and urban populations live on or near flood plains, either to scrape out a living or because better-protected areas are reserved for the propertied classes."

The U.N. report itself admits that floods are not primarily caused by climate change. In fact, a recent study of more than 10,000 rivers around world shows that most rivers now flood less frequently than in decades earlier, reported the *Wall Street Journal* Aug. 6.

The *Journal* wrote it had data "from all climate-related weather disasters such as floods, droughts, storms and fires from the International Disaster Database." Its conclusion? "In the 1920s these disasters killed almost half a million people on average each year. The current climate narrative would suggest that natural disasters are ever deadlier, but that isn't true. Over the past century, climate-related deaths have dropped to fewer than 20,000 on average each year, even though the global population has quadrupled since 1920."

The U.N. climate report says the rate of global sea-level rise has been increasing over the past 50 years. But it doesn't mention the fact that it was increasing almost as rapidly 90 years ago, then decreased strongly for 40 years. The report also asserts that heat waves across the U.S. have become more frequent since 1960, but at the same time it admits that they're not more common today than they were in 1900.

Recent reports show some significant progress has been made, especially since governments worldwide banned chlorofluorocarbons in 1987. The move has been more successful than predicted, as the ozone layer has increased in size and carbon dioxide levels cut sharply.

Of course, chemical alternatives were cheaply available to replace the offending ones in air conditioners and other devices, leading to less complaints from profit-driven bosses.

Liberals and others insisting drastic measures are needed argue that the most extreme recommendations in the report rest on more far-reaching and scientific evidence than previous reports. In fact, they are based not on facts, but on computer models that simulate climate changes.

Models on global warming, for example, don't explain why rapid global warming occurred from 1910 to 1940 when human influences on the climate were much less. The U.N. climate report also has to acknowledge that real-world warming — up 1.1 degrees Celsius in the past 150 years — has been less than projected in previous climate models reports.

Meanwhile, insurance companies are reaping big bucks from predictions of doom and gloom from the climate "modellers." They're selling high premium coverage to individuals, families and even to insure other insurance companies for when climate "catastrophe" strikes.

'A class question'

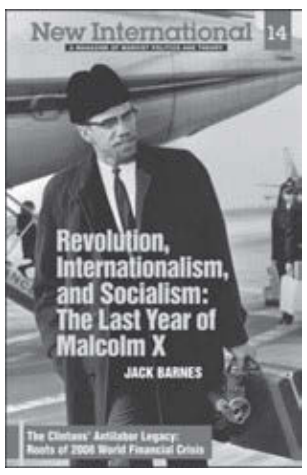
"Environmental pollution is a social question, a class question," Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes wrote in *Capitalism's World Disorder*. "Workers must not fall into accepting the common view — that is, the bourgeois view — that the environment ... is a 'scientific' question, a 'natural' question, that somehow hovers above classes and outside the class struggle."

"The working class must also reject all forms of fake science, exaggerations, catastrophism, and crankism," he said. "[I]f we translate everything commonly thought of as an environmental issue into how to advance the protection of the working class, and how the working class can extend that projection to all, then we can hardly ever go wrong. With that approach, we will increase the possibilities for concrete solidarity in fighting against ecological abuses and outrages."

The latest climate report will be at the center of discussion among those attending the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, Scotland, later this year. It will provide a platform for liberal capitalist politicians who blame working people as the source of the problem. "It's human beings who are adding the greatest amount of fuel to the fire," John Kerry, President Joe Biden's envoy for climate, scolded in an interview in the Aug. 3 *New Yorker*.

"The propertied ruling families," the SWP resolution says, "try to prevent us from recognizing the actual source of these threats to civilization: the capitalist mode of production, the world imperialist order, and the enormous wealth and power the rulers wring from nature and the exploited producers."

The conquest of power by workers and farmers is "the only road to peace and the effective defense of labor and of the earth's land, waters, and atmosphere. Concrete gains for working people can and will be won as byproducts along that road of revolutionary struggle."



The Stewardship of Nature Also Falls to the Working Class:
In Defense of Land and Labor

"Under capitalist social relations, human hardship from natural occurrences falls in starkly different ways on different social classes. In New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, life or death, a home still habitable or forced diaspora — a few feet above or below sea level marked the class divide" — Socialist Workers Party statement in *New International* no. 14

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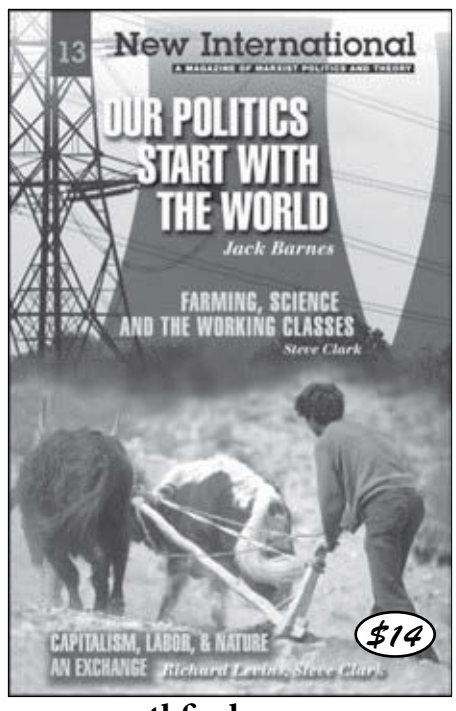
Louisville

Their Morals and Ours: COVID, Unions and the Working-Class Road to Power. Speaker: Kaitlin Estill, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 3.

Defend Cuba's Socialist Revolution. Speaker: Maggie Trowe, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Louisville. Fri., Sept. 10. For both events: Reception, 6:30; program, 7 p.m. Donation: $5. *1939 Goldsmith Lane, Suite 134. Tel.: (502) 882-1041.*



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Solidarity with Nabisco strike!

Continued from front page

Two rallies have already taken place in Portland, and strikers say their picket gets near-constant honks of support.

The workers are fighting attacks on work schedules, seniority and overtime pay, increasing health insurance costs, and cuts to pensions. The company wants to start running 12-hour shifts or longer, with overtime pay kicking in only if workers labor more than a 40-hour week, instead of after eight hours a day. Bosses want to eliminate time and a half pay for Saturdays and double time on Sundays. And they want to bring in more non-union temporary workers.

"For five years the company has refused to let the union business agent into the plant to deal with grievances," said Judy Schultz, a forklift driver with 37 years at the plant. "All their 'offers' are takeaways. The plant manager said, 'They have too many holidays, too many nice cars in the parking lot!'"

Nabisco was gobbled up by candy, gum and baked goods conglomerate Mondelez several years ago. This international giant based in Deerfield, Illinois, raked in nearly $28 billion for the 12 months ending June 30, 2021. The snack baron markets 53 brands, including Cadbury, Chiclets, Chips Ahoy! Clorets, Halls, Oreos, Philadelphia cream cheese, Ritz, Tang, Tate's Bake Shop, Toblerone, Trident, Triscuit and Wheat Thins. They profit off 79,000 employees worldwide.

"It's never enough for the bosses. That's why your example of standing up is so important. Corporations are doing this all over, and they're backed up by their fellow capitalist rulers, who have the state power, the cops and the courts," Rebecca Williamson, a worker at Walmart and Socialist Workers Party candidate for City Council in Seattle, told strikers on the picket line Aug. 20. "Workers and farmers make and create everything. We must build a working-class leadership and our own political party to break out of this cycle."

Williamson is one of three Walmart workers who came to support the strike. Williamson and Patricia Scott, who both work at the Federal Way store, brought a card signed by co-workers along with contributions of $50. Strikers on the picket line were delighted.

"They never want to fix our equipment," said Portia LeBleu, who works in the mixing department. "They're trying to have away jobs by trying to get us to do other people's jobs," added Eileen Giskaas.

We urged pickets to get in touch with United Mine Workers members who've been on strike since April against Warrior Met Coal in Alabama. They hold weekly rallies every Wednesday, including one of 1,500 there Aug. 4, with buses coming in with longshoremen and others from all around the area. The Nabisco strikers really liked the sound of that!

Several picked up copies of the *Militant* reporting on the rally to learn more about the miners strike and other issues affecting working people.

When you fight you can win, said Joyce McNair, a baker with 14 years in the plant. "It makes you feel better because they can't just do anything to you — you have better working conditions, better pay."

Strikers said the company began busing in scabs a week into the strike and a few workers crossed the line. But they're confident in their strike, which is getting support from other unions in the plant who aren't on strike but are honoring their picket lines, including operating engineers, machinists, electrical workers, and Teamsters.

You can help! Visit BCTGM Local 364 Facebook page and send contributions to www.gofundme.com/f/bctgm-local-364-strike-support.

Militant/John Hawkins

Aug. 21 picket at Nabisco plant in Chicago, one of five on strike across U.S. "We're not asking for anything new," say strikers. "We're fighting to hold on to what we've already won."

400 Nabisco workers join strike at Virginia bakery

BY JAMES HARRIS

HENRICO COUNTY, Va. — "I am overwhelmed with the amount of support we are getting. It's the solidarity that is the most important," said BCTGM Local 358 business agent Darlene Carpenter when we joined the picket line outside the Nabisco plant here.

Some 400 bakery workers went on strike here Aug. 16 to stop the company's demands for more concessions and its attempt to divide and conquer the workers.

"The company pushed us to this point and they don't care," said Carpenter. The lively picket line is up 24/7 and includes nightly fish fries and line dancing.

Key to the strike is the company's proposed "alternative work schedule on select high-demand lines." This would mean 12-hour shifts at straight time, rotating two days on, two days off for two weeks, and three days on and two days off for the third.

"They say they want to improve our 'work-life balance,'" said Keith Bragg, president of BCTGM Local 358. "But it destroys it. It takes time away from our family and kids. They are taking us back to the past, before the eight-hour workday, when we worked 'sun up to sun down.' What's to stop them from calling every line 'high demand?'"

The company also wants new hires to pay health care deductibles, where current workers would continue to get 100% coverage. "We gave up raises to not pay health insurance premiums, and now they are using that against us," Bragg said.

Christine Brown, a packing technician who has worked in the plant for 20 years, said, "We're not fighting to get more but to keep what we've got. They are trying to pit the younger workers against the older ones."

Under government lockdown orders people across the country were buying up snacks like there's no tomorrow. "Last year during the pandemic, some people worked 16-hour days for 10 days straight," Carpenter said. "And workers in the plant lived with the fear that if they caught COVID they would bring it home to their families."

Pointing to a sign at the plant entrance that reads 'Heroes work here,' Marva Carter, a 21-year veteran machine operator, said, "We went from hero to zero in just a few days."

Despite what the company claims, "nothing in the plant is running." Christine Brown told the *Militant*. Workers pointed out that when the plant is operating, you can smell the product, and now there is no smell.

The strike is getting a lot of support. Teamsters Local 322, which organizes UPS drivers, brought two cases of water. Unions representing Verizon workers, teachers, mail carriers, Philip Morris and railroad workers have joined the picket line and brought solidarity. A group of local pastors plan to walk the picket line Aug. 26.

I told strikers on the picket line that they're fighting not just for themselves, but for all workers. They're setting an inspiring example.

"When we win this strike," Carpenter said, "come back and help us celebrate." I said I'd be back soon

Continued on page 7

"A giant has begun to stir ..."

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Imperialist scorn, Cuban solidarity on display after Haiti earthquake

Continued from front page

care available on the island.

The sharp exception is the internationalist aid from revolutionary Cuba, whose medical workers have provided care and health education in Haiti continuously since 1998, when it sent 350 volunteers in the wake of Hurricanes George and Mitch. To combat the spread of cholera introduced in Haiti by U.N. troops in 2010, the Cuban health care workers went house to house in the most isolated mountain regions, educating people about the necessary measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

Among thousands of Cuban medical volunteers providing health care all over the world, there are currently 253 doctors, nurses and other medical workers in Haiti, who will remain there as long as they are needed. This is a significant contribution in a country where there are at best 2,500 doctors, most in private practice and concentrated in wealthier neighborhoods.

Cuban internationalist medical workers already in the hardest hit earthquake zone began setting up makeshift hospitals and operating rooms. At the same time, they continue treating and aiding people across the country. Some of the volunteers are "sleeping in tents, like the more than 130,000 families who lost everything on Aug. 14," reported *Trabajadores*, the weekly newspaper of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers.

For the last 22 years, these medical volunteers have collaborated closely with their Haitian colleagues and working people, including giving classes in the health centers and individual homes to raise consciousness about preventive medicine and sanitation.

While the Cuban volunteers are scrupulous about not interfering in the internal politics in Haiti, they are proud of representing their socialist revolution.

We are "showing in practice the values of solidarity and humanism that the heroic guerrilla Ernesto Che Guevara has bequeathed to us," reads a post on the Facebook page of Cuba's mission in Haiti. Guevara was part of the Marxist leadership in Cuba that led workers and farmers to take power and subsequently served on internationalist missions to Congo and Bolivia.

The U.S. rulers and other opponents of the Cuban Revolution have been trying to stir up divisions in Cuba over the challenge the revolution faces in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the tightening of the U.S. embargo. It's a struggle for Cuba to get raw materials and syringes it needs to produce and administer its own vaccines.

Despite these obstacles, the Cuban government reported Aug. 24 it has now obtained supplies needed to inoculate everyone on the island and expects to have done so by the end of November.

"You are keeping medical brigades in other countries, as if there were doctors and medicine to spare" in Cuba, complained the editors of CiberCuba, a Spanish-based website, Aug. 23. "Everything is for propaganda, isn't it?"

These counterrevolutionaries, who defend the dog-eat-dog morality of the capitalist market, are incapable of understanding that such solidarity is not "for propaganda," but is in fact a product of working-class values that are the bedrock of a living socialist revolution. "We don't offer what we have left over," Cuban volunteers often explain. "We share what we have."

What a difference from the so-called nonprofits, nongovernmental agencies and private companies that use the disaster in Haiti ostensibly to provide aid, but in fact to legitimize their operations and line their own pockets.

Working-class solidarity

In addition to the aid from the Cubans, workers and farmers in Haiti have turned to each other's solidarity to get through the current crisis. "I have a friend who came from Port-au-Prince to bring me water and food and I shared that with my neighbors," Marcel Francois told the press.

Dominican journalist Deisy Toussaint, who traveled by land from Port-au-Prince to Les Cayes, told channel 24 TV that she saw areas with homes totally destroyed, where five days after the quake no aid or rescue crews had arrived. "People told us they could hear people still alive under the rubble, and all they had were their hands to try to get them out."

In the absence of any serious government response to the disaster, a handful of recent graduates from Haiti's public medical school pooled their money for supplies and set up a clinic in Marceline.

More than 100 years of U.S. imperialist domination and superexploitation are perpetuating the miserable conditions working people confront in Haiti, ensuring natural disasters rapidly become social catastrophes.

Join Cuba Solidarity Caravans Aug. 29

Halt Washington's economic war against Cuba!
End travel restrictions! U.S. out of Guantánamo!

Miami
Caravan. 9 a.m. assemble at José Martí monument in Coral Gables.

Chicago
Caravan. 2 p.m. assemble at 106th St and State Line Road. Rally 3:30 p.m. at Steelworkers Park.

Schenectady, New York
Caravan. 12 noon assemble at Schenectady Community College parking lot.

New York City
Caravan. 2 p.m. assemble at State Office Building. Rally 3 p.m. at Che, Albizu mural at 201 E. 105th St.

Dallas
Caravan. 1:30 p.m. assemble at Pan African Connection Bookstore parking lot, 4466 S. Marsalis Ave.

Seattle
Picket. 11 a.m. corner E. Green Lake Way North and W. Green Lake Way North. Followed by bike and walk around Green Lake.

Washington, D.C.
Caravan. 3 p.m. assemble 4700 block of 14th St. NW.

CANADA

Vancouver, British Columbia
Caravan. 12 noon assemble. 2 p.m. picnic. Call 604-780-4029 for location.

Montreal
Caravan. 2 p.m. assemble at Métro Plamondon parking lot, exit Van Horne and Victoria.

UNITED KINGDOM

Manchester
Sat. Aug. 28, 12 p.m. Public Meeting at The Sportsman, 57 Mottram Road, Hyde, SK14 7NN

Glasgow
Sat. Aug. 28 Caravan. 1 p.m. assemble at Donald Dewar Statue, Buchanan St.

Brighton and Hove
Sun. Aug 29 Walk. 11:30 a.m. meet at Voks Railway Terminus, Brighton Marina.

Protest Washington's economic war on Cuban Revolution

BY SETH GALINSKY

Car and bike caravans, pickets and rallies to protest Washington's more than 60-year-long economic war on Cuba are planned Aug. 29 in a half dozen U.S. cities as well as in Canada, the United Kingdom and other countries. Some will take place the day before. The monthly caravans, which began last year, are helping to win new support to the fight against the U.S. government embargo.

Every U.S. president — Democrat and Republican alike — has sought to punish the Cuban people for overthrowing the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista on Jan. 1, 1959, dismantling the capitalist regime's military, police and state machinery and replacing them with a workers and farmers government.

Led by Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara and others, working people in Cuba made ever-deeper inroads against capitalist exploitation and property relations, transforming themselves in the process. They recognized through their own experience — and were determined to defend — the socialist character of their revolution and the Marxist character of their leadership. The depth of those changes is why six decades later the U.S. rulers have been unable to overturn it.

They used their new government to carry out a thoroughgoing land reform that guaranteed land for thousands of peasant farmers. They outlawed racist discrimination and enforced it. Tens of thousands of young people went to the countryside to teach people to read and write, eliminating illiteracy in a year, and changing forever both teachers and students.

Workers took increasing control over production in the nationalized factories. They became more conscious of their class interests, more confident in their ability to organize society, more determined to extend solidarity to others fighting imperialist domination throughout Latin America and around the globe.

What the U.S. rulers fear most is that working people elsewhere, especially in the United States, will learn from the Cuban Revolution and organize to emulate it.

The Joseph Biden administration has been tightening the U.S. rulers' economic and political war against Cuba, the effects of which are exacerbated by today's worldwide capitalist economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, to tighten the screws on the Cuban people and their revolution. He has built on and expanded the measures imposed by the Donald Trump administration before him.

On Aug. 19 Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas met with a range of counterrevolutionary groups in Miami to deepen their support for the administration's anti-Cuba measures.

The Aug. 28 and 29 actions are an opportunity for all those who oppose the U.S. embargo to join together to get out the truth about Cuba, to demand that all the sanctions and travel restrictions on Cuba be lifted, and to demand Washington get out of Guantánamo, which it has occupied for over a century against the will of the Cuban people. See the calendar below for the actions nearest you.

Militant/Jim Upton

July 25 rally after car caravan in Montreal against U.S. embargo of Cuba. The monthly actions demand end to Washington's more than 60-year push to destroy Cuba's socialist revolution.

Solidarity with Nabisco strike!

Continued from previous page

with more solidarity.

Support the Nabisco strikers! Send solidarity messages and financial contributions to BCTGM Local 358, 1310 E. Nine Mile Road, Highland Springs, VA 23075.

Nabisco workers walk off the job in Chicago

BY ILONA GERSH

CHICAGO — Some 350 workers walked off the job at midnight Aug. 19 at the Nabisco factory on the South Side here. They were joined the next day by 40 workers at a company distribution center in Addison, a Chicago suburb.

"I want to emphasize, that we're not negotiating for anything new," Veronica Hopkins, Bakery Workers union Local 1 business agent, told *Militant* worker-correspondents who joined the picket line Aug. 21. "We're trying to hold on to what we won a long time ago. These are rights that the company is trying to take away despite the fact that they are reporting record profits.

"For most of the workers, the number one issue is health care," Hopkins said.

Salvador Gustavo, a Nabisco retiree, came back to work two months ago in the repack department, where everyone is part time. "I couldn't afford to retire," he said. "I want to transfer into the factory. Where I am, I'm part time, and we don't have any benefits, no vacations or health care. I especially need the health care."

He makes $11.50 an hour, while starting pay for production workers in the factory is $19.36, and goes up to almost $30. Gustavo isn't on strike, since the part-time department is not union, but he pickets when he's not working.

Tommy Hamer is a mixer who has worked here for 17 years. He carried over years of seniority from working 20 years in another Chicago Nabisco plant the bosses closed.

In 2016, he said, the company stopped investing in the pension plan. Now there's only a 401(k).

"The health care plan we have now pays 100% of the expenses, with no co-pays or monthly payments. They want to make it 80/20, and want to make us pay a weekly payment for the benefits we get," Hamer said. "This is going to start forcing us to choose between health care and other necessary living expenses." He's 66 years old and recently had a stroke.

At first the company wanted to get rid of 100% health care coverage for all workers. But when the union said no, the company replied, "OK, we'll let present employees keep their 100% coverage, if they accept everything else we're asking for as a package. But new hires will have to pay for their health care."

"That's a bribe," Hamer said. "They want to keep us all divided."

Strikers told us the bosses have sped up the line. "As a mixer, I should be mixing 16 batches per eight-hour shift. Now it's up to 20," said Hamer.

Paul Hood, a forklift operator, has worked in the plant for 25 years. When we asked about safety on the job, he said, "Management talks the talk, but they don't walk the walk. And if you have an accident, they blame you."

In 2016, the factory shut down its Oreo, Ritz cracker, and graham cracker production lines, transferring the work to a factory in Mexico. Six hundred jobs in Chicago were eliminated.

"They hired 200 back, but we still lost 400 jobs, and they haven't been replacing many workers who are promoted or quit," Hopkins said.

"If someone calls off and the shift is short of workers, they force us to do overtime, which is mandatory," said Hamer. "They can make us work up to 16 hours. I want to work my eight hours and go home, and have Saturday and Sunday off."

Nabisco wants to set the workday at 12 hours on so-called essential production lines, or lines with high volume. "But they control the volume," Hopkins said. "They can shift production from another factory to here, and then say that they need to run 12-hour shifts. And that other factory is left short on work."

Working class must be vanguard of all the exploited people

One of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August is Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite! Proceedings and Documents of the Second Congress of the Communist International, 1920 (Vol. 2). *Delegates came to the congress from 37 countries in Europe, Asia, the Americas and Australia. This excerpt is from "Preliminary Draft Theses on the Agrarian Question," by V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution and of the Communist International. Key to the Bolsheviks leading working people to conquer power was their Marxist program to forge an alliance of workers and peasants. In his theses, Lenin draws on the lessons of that experience to help guide revolutionary parties inspired by the Russian Revolution worldwide. Copyright © 1991 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

Peasants rally in support of Russian Revolution. When Bolshevik Party led the Soviets to take power, they abolished private ownership in land, turned farms over to those who tilled them.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY V.I. LENIN

1. Only the urban and industrial proletariat, led by the Communist Party, can liberate the working masses of the countryside from the yoke of capital and landed proprietorship, from ruin and the imperialist wars that will inevitably break out again and again if the capitalist system remains. There is no salvation for the working masses of the countryside except in alliance with the Communist proletariat, and unless they give the latter devoted support in its revolutionary struggle to throw off the yoke of the landowners (the large landed proprietors) and the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, the industrial workers cannot accomplish their epoch-making mission of emancipating mankind from the yoke of capital and from wars if they connect themselves to their narrow craft or trade interests and smugly restrict themselves to attaining an improvement in their own conditions. …

The proletariat is a really revolutionary class and acts in a really socialist manner only when it comes out and acts as the vanguard of all the working and exploited people, as their leader in the struggle for the overthrow of the exploiters; this, however, cannot be achieved unless the class struggle is carried into the countryside, unless the rural working masses are united about the Communist Party of the urban proletariat, and unless they are trained by the proletariat.

2. The working and exploited people of the countryside, whom the urban proletariat must lead into the struggle or, at all events, win over, are represented in all capitalist countries by the following classes:

First, the agricultural proletariat, wage laborers (by the year, season, or day) who obtain their livelihood by working for hire at capitalist agricultural enterprises. The organization of this class (political, military, trade union, cooperative, cultural, educational, and so on) independently and separately from other groups of the rural population, the conduct of intensive propaganda and agitation among this class, and the winning of its support for the soviets and the dictatorship of the proletariat constitute the *fundamental* tasks of the Communist parties in all countries.

Second, the semiproletarians or peasants who till tiny plots of land, that is, those who obtain their livelihood partly as wage laborers at agricultural and industrial capitalist enterprises and partly by working their own or rented plots of land, which provide their families only with part of their means of subsistence. This group of the rural working population is very numerous in all capitalist countries. …

If the work of the Communist Party is properly organized, this group will become its assured supporter, for the lot of these semiproletarians is a very hard one and they stand to gain enormously and immediately from soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Third, the small peasantry, that is, the small-scale tillers who, either as owners or as tenants, hold small plots of land that enable them to satisfy the needs of their families and their farms and who do not hire outside labor. This stratum, as such, undoubtedly stands to gain by the victory of the proletariat, which will fully and immediately bring it (a) deliverance from the necessity of paying the large landowners rent or a share of the crop; … (b) deliverance from mortgages; (c) deliverance from the numerous forms of oppression by and dependence on the large landowners (forest lands and their use, etc.); (d) immediate aid for their farms from the proletarian state (the use of the agricultural implements and part of the buildings on the large capitalist farms confiscated by the proletariat and the immediate conversion, by the proletarian state, of the rural cooperative societies and agricultural associations from organizations that under capitalism served above all the rich and middle peasants into organizations that will primarily assist the poor, that is, proletarians, semiproletarians, small peasants, etc.), and many other things.

At the same time the Communist Party must clearly realize that during the transitional period from capitalism to communism, that is, during the dictatorship of the proletariat, this stratum, or at all events part of it, will inevitably vacillate toward unrestricted freedom of trade and the free enjoyment of the rights of private property. That is because this stratum, which, if only in a small way, is a seller of articles of consumption, has been corrupted by profiteering and by proprietary habits. However, if a firm proletarian policy is pursued, and if the victorious proletariat deals very resolutely with the large landowners and the large peasants, this stratum … will side with the proletarian revolution.

3. Taken together, the three groups enumerated above constitute the majority of the rural population in all capitalist countries. That is why the success of the proletarian revolution is fully assured, not only in the cities but in the countryside as well. The reverse view is widespread. However, it persists only, first, because of the deception systematically practiced by bourgeois science and statistics, which do everything to gloss over both the gulf that separates the above-mentioned classes in the countryside from the exploiters — the landowners and capitalists — and that which separates the semiproletarians and small peasants from the large peasants.

AUGUST
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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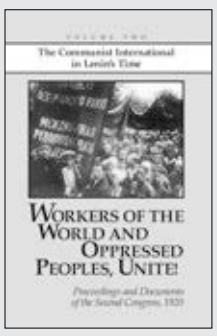

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SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Join Labor Day actions, build solidarity

Statement by Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party candidate for New Jersey governor, Aug. 25.

Marches, rallies and other actions planned by the labor movement around the country on or around Sept. 6 to mark Labor Day are an excellent opportunity to spread the word about strikes by Alabama coal miners, Nabisco workers and others on strike or locked out by bosses demanding we give up hard-won gains. The bosses and their government are attacking workers to bolster their ability to crush their competitors and boost profits at our expense. We need to step up efforts to get the word out about today's labor battles and build solidarity with these struggles.

We can bring real help to these battles, strengthening picket lines and raising money for strike funds. Widening union support — as well as from farmers and youth— can tip the balance. We need to emulate the example set by 60 International Longshoremen's Association members and other unionists who joined the Aug. 4 rally of striking miners at Warrior Met Coal in Alabama. I attended it and pledged to do more.

Workers at Frito-Lay in Topeka, Kansas, struck for three weeks in July. They showed union power can be utilized effectively, winning solidarity and pushing back bosses' efforts to impose what workers called "suicide shifts."

As long as the bosses control production they will look for ways to impose debilitating work schedules and cut away at job safety. When bosses say they need to boost "productivity," it means we will face increasingly dangerous line speeds and other attacks on our lives and limbs.

This is the way the capitalist system works — class against class. We have to organize to fight to defend ourselves and our class. All work can be performed safely for workers, those who live nearby and in ways that protect the planet.

We need to use our unions to take more control over line speeds, working hours, hiring and over how and what products are made. When we fight, our self-confidence and class consciousness grows and we win allies. These battles are a school in preparation for more struggles as the crisis of capitalism deepens.

It is becoming clearer our unions need to break from the bosses' two parties, the Democrats and Republicans. We need our own political party, a labor party, that can lead our class and its allies in the millions to overturn capitalist rule and take political power into our own hands. Putting a workers and farmers government in power will provide the most powerful instrument possible to fight to sweep away the centurieslong legacy of racism and all forms of oppression.

As workers and farmers in Cuba showed in 1959 and since, with proper leadership working people are capable of carrying through a socialist revolution and taking control of our own destiny. Join us!

All workers have stake in today's labor struggles

Continued from front page

tacks by the bosses," the paper quoted Dennison. "My co-workers agree we have to stand together and use our unions to strengthen each other."

Today's strikes are examples of exactly what is needed in the face of employers stepping up their drive for profits off our backs. Bosses across the country are seeking to boost production, deal blows to competitors and raise profits. They're out to cut costs through job combinations, speedup and holding down wages. As their rivalries sharpen, attacks on workers will deepen.

They hope that millions thrown out of work over the last year who are looking to get back into the workforce will raise competition among workers and hinder working-class solidarity.

One sign the bosses are moving to tighten their squeeze on workers is a Labor Department report stating that worker productivity grew by 4.3% between January and March, the highest increase in many years. Bosses are putting in more automation and setting higher production quotas to get out more goods with fewer workers. Amazon is notorious for this.

Many bosses are pushing more pay tiers, to play newly hired workers against those with more experience who often do the same job. The bosses want to employ a greater percentage of contract workers to cut wages and weaken our unions.

Unions must lead fight for jobs

Our unions need to lead a fight to get the millions of workers still out of work back on the job. Employers threaten strikers with replacement workers drawn from the ranks of the unemployed, to try to weaken our struggles.

President Joseph Biden claimed Aug. 19 that he is "delivering real results for American workers" by creating more jobs than any other president. The fact is 18 months into the pandemic, 5.7 million fewer workers have jobs than before it began. Biden has *no* jobs program, relying instead on handing billions to the bosses, who only hire workers when they can turn a profit, and at the lowest wages they can impose.

"Our unions must lead a fight for jobs," Dennison said. "They should mobilize their members to fight for a federally funded public works program to put millions back to work at union-scale wages to build houses, hospitals, day care centers and other things workers need. We cannot allow a section of our class to be driven out of the workforce, isolated from fellow workers and demoralized."

"Our unions need to take control of the organization of mass vaccination against COVID and all its variants," Dennison said. "Every worker needs to be vaccinated. And the unions should fight to force the government to share patents and vaccines with toilers worldwide. These steps are the only way to stop the ravages of the disease. As on all social questions, the unions have to lead."

Our unions need to fight for a 30-hour workweek at 40 hours pay. Whenever the boss wants to cut back work, our hours must be reduced with no cut in pay to prevent layoffs while protecting our standard of living.

Alongside the effects of widespread unemployment, the bosses' media claim there is nothing we can do about rising prices. Both the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times* ran headlines Aug. 18 that told readers "don't panic about inflation." Price rises that the Federal Reserve insisted were only "transitory" have continued to grow. Prices at the supermarket and gas pump are at their highest rates in decades.

The crisis of capitalist production and trade today is making all this worse. The price of thermal coal shipped out of Newcastle, Australia, used to generate electricity across Asia, has risen 106% this year. Freight rates for container shipping worldwide rose to their highest level ever in August — signs inflation is likely to continue.

"The capitalist ruling families are unwilling and unable to hold down prices," Dennison said. "Workers need to fight for cost-of-living clauses in every contract and for retirees, so that when prices rise, our wages go up to match them 100%."

Fighting for what workers need to protect ourselves from the impact of the crisis requires organizing unions, using union power on the job and building a party that serves the class interests workers share, not those of the capitalists, as the Democratic and Republican parties have always done.

"Workers need to break from the bosses' parties and build a labor party," Dennison said. "This is the road to build a fighting working-class party that can take political power out of the hands of the capitalist class, form a workers and farmers government and wield it in the interests of all those who are exploited and oppressed by capital. This is a socialist revolution."

Afghan disaster deepens

Continued from front page

tens of thousands of lives. Washington's occupation blocked action by working people to advance their own class interests; propped up governments that defended landlord and capitalist exploitation; and made it harder for working people to fight the Taliban and other reactionary forces.

The Taliban sent hundreds of its fighters to the outskirts of the Panjshir Valley Aug. 23, vowing to crush resistance that erupted against its rule.

The reactionary Islamist group enforced stifling political and cultural conditions on working people when it previously ruled the country. These included imposition of Sharia law, public executions, preventing workers from organizing, and stopping women from working and girls from going to school.

After Kabul fell, Mujahid announced the Taliban won't seek revenge against its opponents and wants to form an "inclusive government." It has held talks with senior bourgeois opposition figures, including former President Hamid Karzai.

In the wake of its military pullout, Washington is using its vast economic weight to pressure the Taliban, announcing it is preventing the export of U.S. dollars to Kabul. The former Afghan government was heavily dependent on an inflow of dollars to prop up the country's currency.

The Taliban inherits a capitalist economy three times larger than when it was in power 20 years ago. Especially in the countryside, it is one still largely dependent on the drug trade. Less than half the population has access to sanitation, and the country remains one of the world's poorest. Some 3.5 million people are now internally displaced by the war.

Protests against Taliban rule

Protesters in a number of cities raised the Afghan national flag Aug. 19, Afghanistan's independence day, which celebrates the defeat of British imperial forces in 1919. Some tore down white Taliban banners. Mohammed Salim told Reuters that he saw several people "killed and injured in the stampede and firing by the Taliban," when anti-Taliban protesters took to the streets in Asadabad.

In Kabul about 200 people gathered before the action was broken up by the Taliban. Protests also took place in other provinces.

Nine men were tortured and murdered by Taliban fighters in a village in Ghazni province in early July, according to Amnesty International. They belonged to the Hazara, an ethnic group who practice a Shiite version of Islam and speak a Persian dialect. The Hazara have long been persecuted in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The rulers in Beijing, Tehran and Islamabad, as well as in Moscow, are seeking to extend their influence in Afghanistan. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the governments of Russia, China and Pakistan are offering to serve as mediators alongside Washington with the aim of reconciling the Taliban and its political opponents.

Beijing wants stability in Afghanistan for its investments and minerals extraction, including lithium and rare earths used in the manufacture of computers.

U.S. imperialism lost the war

The U.S. rulers had long ceased trying to win their war in Afghanistan before President Joseph Biden announced the U.S. troop withdrawal. The disorganized military flight has provoked bitter recriminations from within both the two main U.S. capitalist parties.

Washington's retreat undermines the U.S. rulers' standing at the head of the world imperialist order, boosts its rivals and makes it harder to demand governments that stand in its way submit to its dictates.

As the Socialist Workers Party resolution "Their Transformation and Ours" published in *New International* no. 12 explains, the U.S. rulers' bombardment of Afghanistan and overturn of the Taliban in 2001 was aimed at "persuading" governments across the region "that continuing to get crosswise with Washington is not only against their class interests but contrary over an extended period to their own survival."

Despite their retreat, the U.S. rulers remain by far the world's dominant imperialist power with tens of thousands of military forces at bases across the Middle East and massive deployments of bombers, drones, warships, artillery and troops around the globe.